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ALSTON-WITH-GARRIGILL

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
FOR 1963

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To The  
CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE  
ALSTON-WITH-GARRIGILL  
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Harrison and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my report as Medical  
Officer of Health for the year 1963. I wish to thank the  
Public Health Inspector for his assistance in preparation  
of my report.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN R. HASSAN,

Medical Officer of Health.

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REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR  
ALSTON-WITH-GARRIGILL RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR  
THE YEAR 1963

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SECTION A

VITAL STATISTICS

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area

Area .. .. .	36,971 Acres
Population .. .. .	2,060
Number of inhabited houses according to rate book.	
Alston Ward .. .. .	531
Nenthead Ward .. .. .	192
Garrigill Ward .. .. .	129
	<hr/>
Total	854
	<hr/>
Rateable Value .. .. .	£47,046
Penny Rate Product .. .. .	£176

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COMMENT

The bare figures for 1963 of Resident Population, births and deaths show further unfavourable trends. The number of deaths is the same as 1962, while the number of births is down by nine to twenty four. This is the lowest figure ever recorded. The figures coupled must make one wonder how the vital economy of the area can survive. In rural Cumberland it is estimated that depopulation is occurring at the rate of 1% per annum. This should give an emigration figure in the low twenties, but here we are faced with a figure of one hundred and twenty in a single year. It is not proposed to offer any reason except that this must be a freak event which has taken us to an all-time low, and that the future will show a resurgence of vital activity in this rural area.

Having mentioned one freak it is impossible not to write about the winter of 1963, which all agree was fortunately quite exceptional in its severity. It was only natural that this winter should be compared with 1947. It is impossible to measure every factor but it is felt that 1963 won for severity and that hardship was reduced by the much increased efficiency with which it was tackled by those hardy people whose job it is. On Friday the 18th January snow began to fall and the wind rose and by night many roads were blocked and vehicles abandoned. This continued and by Saturday evening mother nature had taken complete control and every road was totally blocked and the wind continued at blizzard strength until late on Sunday evening although snow had ceased to fall.

The depth of snow was one foot four inches but drifting was mountainous and in built up areas reached the level of the gutters of two storey buildings. To add to our difficulties there was an electricity failure for over twelve hours on this Sunday. Earlier there had been a fall of one foot two inches of snow on the 3rd. January and later a fall of one foot five inches on the 6th. February. The minimum temperature was above freezing point on only one occasion only during January and on no occasion during February. This held until the 6th. March when a rapid thaw set in. In this case 1947 was more severe in that a snow storm occurred on the 17th March which blocked all roads but then the snow did not begin to fall until the last Sunday in January that year. I am grateful to be able to report that during this inclement weather the health of the Community was excellent but I am in no doubt as to the damage done to our respiratory passages by the prolonged frosts because the months that followed brought a greatly increased number of acute and chronic respiratory ailments which were not assisted by the prolonged wet spring and summer months.

There is no unemployment in the area and it is a good thing that there has been an increase in the scope of work offered to young people so that the opportunities of learning and apprenticeship are much greater than for twenty years. As stated earlier our main concern is depopulation.

People are increasingly attending for chest X. rays when the mass radiography unit visits Alston. This is to be greatly commended. In this matter there has been a further reduction in the number on the Tuberculosis Register. The number is in single figures and this compares well with the number which has held for many years when it was always in the thirties. Other notifiable diseases were markedly absent, one case of measles only was recorded during 1963.

Parents continue to seek protection for their children against the infections and the figures later recorded are good. Only one instance comes to mind where immunisation was refused on conscientious grounds.

Rebuilding, rehousing and demolition of old properties all progressed and the erection of the combined group dwelling for the elderly was begun. This new venture will prove to be one of the major welfare provisions of the post war era.

Overall the circumstances of our community are satisfactory and there is not any major factor calling for adverse comment.

I should like to thank the Chairman and members of the Health Committee for their continuing interest and support during the year.

LIVE BIRTHS

							1963	
							M	F
Legitimate..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13	11
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	..	-	-
							24	

STILL BIRTHS

							M	F
Legitimate..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	..	-	-
							2	

							M	F
Deaths of Infants under 1 week of age							-	-
" " " " 4 weeks " "							-	1
" " " " 1 year " "							1	-
							2	

ANNUAL BIRTH RATE per 1,000 estimated population.

For this area	..	..	..	..	..	..	11.6
For Cumberland	..	..	..	..	..	..	17.7
For Rural District of Cumberland	..	..					18.2
For England and Wales	..	..	..	..			18.2

							M	F
<u>DEATHS</u>	..	..	..	..	..	..	18	15
							33	

ANNUAL DEATH RATE per 1,000 estimated population

For this area	..	..	..	..	..	..	15.0
For Cumberland	..	..	..	..	..	..	12.5
For Rural District of Cumberland	..	..					13.1
For England and Wales	..	..	..	..			12.2

Deaths from Puerpal Causes	..	..	..		-
Death from Cancer (all ages)	..	..	..	M	F
				3	3
				<hr/>	
				6	
				<hr/>	

S E C T I O N    B

(1) PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY

Medical Officer of Health (Part-time)  
John R. Hassan, M.B., Ch.B., D.R.C.O.G.,  
Cottage Hospital,  
ALSTON.

Public Health Inspector,  
R. W. Thomas, M.A.P.H.I.,  
Town Hall,  
ALSTON.

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(2) (a) Laboratory Facilities

The Pathological Laboratory of the Cumberland Infirmary, Carlisle supplies a complete range of service under this heading.

(b) Ambulance

This service runs satisfactorily.

(c) Home Nursing

This service continues to run efficiently and some figures are given to show the extent of the work.

Number of home helps on books	10
Number of house holders helped	13
Number of cases nursed	85
Number of nursing visits	2,179
Number of health visiting visits	1,573

The Matron of the Cottage Hospital in collaboration with the District Nurses has established weekly classes in Mothercraft and Relaxation. It is encouraging to report these classes are well attended with benefit to all concerned.

(d) Clinics and Treatment Centres

Consultant Services are available at Carlisle and Newcastle. Physiotherapy is available on two mornings each week at the Cottage Hospital. Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics are held weekly at the Cottage Hospital provided of course by the Cumberland County Council. The School Dental Clinic is held one day a fortnight at the Cottage Hospital .

The Dental Service (N.H.S.) is provided one day a week by a Private Practitioner.

East Cumberland Hospital Management Committee provide a Consultant Radiology Service one afternoon each fortnight.

## SECTION C

### WATER SUPPLIES

Following instructions laid down in Ministry of Health Circular, 1/64.

(a) The quality of the water supplied through the water mains was satisfactory. The various supplies are derived from land springs in carboniferous limestone. The spring at Killhope, Nenthead, however, has a fairly high iron content which causes slight discolouration, which becomes more pronounced when a sluice valve or fire hydrant is operated. This is due to the fact that for the most part, the mains in the village of Nenthead are of Asbestos Cement pressure pipes. When the pipes are not running full bore a coating of brown powder is left adhering to the internal surfaces. When the pipes run at full bore again this coating is washed off and for a short period of time afterwards, the discolouration is heavy.

With regard to quantity, again Nenthead presents the greatest problem because there is too small a quantity of water in reserve. The difference in head between the storage tank and the properties in the village has the effect of making a small leak take on major proportions, but on the whole a satisfactory supply was maintained.

Under normal conditions, the position in Alston is satisfactory but since the Alston Foundry Ltd. converted to all electric furnaces in 1959, their annual consumption has risen to three to four times, with the result that a closer watch has to be kept on the reservoir water levels.

Garrigill and Leadgate present no problems with regard to quantity.

(b) Type AHWM reagent feeders are installed at Springfield, Alston and at Killhope, Nenthead. Partly due to the loss of yield at the Killhope spring, combined with iron in suspension, difficulty is experienced in maintaining this machine in working order.

(c) None of the water supplies are liable to plumbo solvency.

(d) Action taken in the event of contamination is covered by (b) above.

(e) No. of dwelling houses supplied	(1) direct to houses	679
	(2) by standpipes	9
No. of population supplied	(1) direct to houses	1,930
	(2) by stand pipes	9

It should be noted that from 1st. April, 1963 the water undertaking was administered by the Eden Water Board.

### SEWERS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

There is little change from last year. The adequacy of the existing works at Alston leaves room for doubt, but it is hoped that by the end of 1964, more details will be available.

### REGISTERED COMMON LODGING HOUSES

There are none in the district.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

The alterations to the Men's Conveniences was completed and were ready for use at Easter.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

A new side loading vehicle was purchased during the year.

As in other years, the service can be regarded as having been carried out successfully.

My remarks on the changing composition of house refuse are the same as those made last year and if the householders and shopkeepers co-operated more, greater efficiency could be achieved.

This co-operation would consist of burning as much paper as possible and making compact parcels of empty cartons.

Having regard to the number of properties, population and the small complement of out door staff a system of salvage collection would prove to be impractical and uneconomical.

SANITARY POSITION OF THE AREA

Number of Inspections	..	..	..	..	..	579
Nuisances Report	..	..	..	..	..	1
Nuisances abated by Informal Notices	..	..				1
Informal Notices	..	..	..	..	..	1
Statutory Notices	..	..	..	..	..	-
Number of Houses Inspected	..	..	..	..		189
Number of Houses disinfected	..	..	..			-
New Houses erected (Local Authority)	..	..				-
New Houses erected (Privately)	..	..	..			1
Plans submitted	..	..	..	..	..	28
Plans approved	..	..	..	..	..	27
Number of Sewer connections	..	..	..	..		-
Number of Water connections	..	..	..	..		-
Houses demolished	..	..	..	..	..	9
Houses closed	..	..	..	..	..	4

FACTORIES

(i) Inspection for purposes of Provisions as to health (including inspections made by the Sanitary Inspectors)

<u>Premises</u>	No On Register	No. of Inspections	No. of Written Notices	No. of Occ. Pros.
(i) Factories in which Sec. 1,2,3,4, & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	4	1	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (1) in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	13	13	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which Sec. 7. is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding-out-workers premises).	-	-	-	-
	17	14	-	-

(ii) Cases in which defects were found .. .. Nil.

SECTION DHOUSING

Work was commenced on building 12 flatlets and a Home for aged Persons at the Maltings, Alston.

POST WAR HOUSING

Council Houses completed at the end of 1963	..	..	..	141
Privately owned Houses " " " " "	..	..	..	16
Estimated number of houses unfit for habitation which cannot be made fit at reasonable cost	..	..	..	48
Number of houses overcrowded	..	..	..	7
Total number of applicants for Council Houses	..	..	..	28

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Number of privately owned houses for which Improvement Grants were sought	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Number of applicants for Grants approved	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Number of improvements completed	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Improvement Grant total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	£1,635

STANDARD GRANTS

Number of Standard Grant applications granted	..	..	..	..	5
Number of Standard Grant work completed	..	..	..	..	3
Standard grant Total	..	..	..	..	£331

SECTION EMEATSSlaughterhouses

One privately owned slaughterhouse was operated satisfactorily during the year.

The quality of beasts etc. has been very high, and the only meat found to be unfit were a small percentage of offal - livers affected by fluke worm.

There was no evidence of *Cisticercus Bovis*.

The throughput for the slaughterhouse for the year was:-

Cattle 131                  Sheep 437

MILK

Number of retailers 9.

Again attention is drawn to the condition of milk bottles. The public are largely to blame as often there are long delays before the empty bottles are returned to the dairyman.

Also care on all sides should be taken to prevent the chipping of the necks of bottles and chipped bottles should NOT be used.

CATERING ESTABLISHMENTS

Again the various establishments have been satisfactory. They are as follows :-

	Licenced Hotels	Temperance Hotels	Snack Bar	Fish & Chip Shop	Total
Alston	5	1	2	2	10
Nenthead	1	-	-	-	1
Garrigill	1	-	-	-	1

The total number of licenced premises are as under:-

Alston	..	..	..	..	8
Nenthead	..	..	..	..	3
Garrigill	..	..	..	..	1
					<u>1</u>

Premises registered under Sec. 16 of the Food & Drugs Act, 1955,  
(Making Sausages and Pressed Meats) .. .. . 2  
Premises registered for the sale of ice cream only .. 10

RECORD OF FOOD VOLUNTARILY SURRENDERED DURING 1963

Cooked Ham	1 tin, 12 lbs 0 ozs.	Corned Beef	1 tin 6 lbs. 0 ozs.
Pears	14 tins 25 lbs 0 ozs.	Peaches	9 tins 18 lbs. 13 ozs.
Apricots	1 tin, 15 ozs.	Peeled tomatoes	2 tins 1 lb. 12 ozs.
Tomato Juice	1 tin, 15 ozs.	Processed Peas	2 tins 1 lb. 9½ ozs.
Cocoa	5 lbs 10 ozs.		

SECTION FINFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

## Poliomyelitis Vaccination.

Primary .. .. .	26
Completed .. .. .	22
Booster .. .. .	27

## Smallpox Vaccination

Primary .. .. .	3
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## Triple Antigen

Primary .. .. .	30
Completed .. .. .	20

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES FOR THE YEAR 1962DISEASE

Typhoid .. .. .	-
Paratyphoid .. .. .	-
Scarlet Fever .. .. .	-
Whooping Cough .. .. .	-
Diphtheria .. .. .	-
Erysipelas .. .. .	-
Smallpox .. .. .	-
Measles .. .. .	1
Pneumonia .. .. .	-
Puerper Pyrexia .. .. .	-
Dysentery .. .. .	-
Ac. Poliomyelitis .. .. .	-
Chicken Pox .. .. .	-
Tuberculosis .. .. .	-
Meningitis .. .. .	-

CAUSE OF DEATH	SEX	TOTAL ALL AGES	UNDER 4 WEEKS	4 WEEKS AND UNDER 1 YEAR	AGE IN YEARS									
					1-	5-	15-	25-	35-	45-	55-	65-	75+	
11. MALIGNANT NEOPLASM, LUNG, BRONCHUS	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
13. MALIGNANT NEOPLASM, UTERUS	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
14. OTHER MALIGNANT AND LYMPHATIC NEOPLASMS	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	
	F	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
15. LEUKAEMIA, ALLEUKAEMIA	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
16. DIABETES	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	
17. VASCULAR LESIONS OF NERVOUS SYSTEM	M	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	3	
	F	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	4	
18. CORONARY DISEASE, ANGINA	M	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	
	F	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	
20. OTHER HEART DISEASE	M	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
23. PNEUMONIA	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
24. BRONCHITIS	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
31. CONGENITAL MALFORMATIONS	M	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
32. OTHER DEFINED AND ILL-DEFINED DISEASES	M	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<u>TOTAL ALL CAUSES</u>	M	18	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	2	9	
	F	15	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	5	7	



